



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Maintaining the Security and Privacy of Student Data



Introduction

You are being given access to data tools that may allow you to view individual student records for performing your official duties.

CONFIDENTIAL

You are legally and ethically obliged to safeguard the confidentiality of these student records.



Introduction

- Many different tools exist for exploring data.
- Some of these tools (WINSS, SPR) access public information.
- Other tools (MDAT) access student data and must be secured.



Introduction

- If you have been granted permission to use a secured tool, you have been given access to a powerful method for exploring student data.
- You are encouraged to use these tools to pursue your own questions and create your own reports.
- The purpose of this presentation is to inform you of your responsibilities to protect student privacy.



Rights

Depending on your role, you may be able to access:

- Student-level data
- Summary data
- Student variables
- Download option



Responsibilities

- Protect the privacy of students and the confidentiality of student data.
- Comply with state and federal laws, and district policy, to maintain the confidentiality of student data.
- Use confidential student data only as necessary for legitimate educational purposes.
- Keep your password confidential.



Consequences

Student education data may not be released except under specific circumstances. Improper release of these data expose you and your district to potential criminal and civil liability, and loss of federal funds.



Examples of Confidential Student Data

- Student number
- Attendance
- Habitual truancy
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Dropout
- Course-taking



Examples of Confidential Student Data

- Retention
- Test results
- Primary disability category
- Migrant status
- Homeless status
- English language proficiency level
- Educational environment
- Free and reduced lunch eligibility



Protecting Confidential Information

- Student-specific information gathered from this tool may be shared only with authorized school personnel.



Protecting Confidential Information

- Be careful to prevent unauthorized people from viewing your screen while you are accessing confidential information.
- When you are finished with the data tools, log off and close any windows containing data or reports.

What Can – and Can't – Be Released

Individual student data can never be publicly published or released.





What Can – and Can't – Be Released

Summary (aggregated) data can be released, but only if the group size is large enough to protect the privacy of individual members of the group.

When the identity of an individual student could be inferred due to small group size in a report, treat that report as confidential.

The summary reports to which you have access may contain small group sizes, and should therefore be treated as confidential.



Sharing Reports

- Printed reports can be shared publicly only after you've reviewed them to ensure that no student could be identified from the report (for example, in conjunction with other information that is available).



Sharing Reports

- If a reasonable person from your community could identify a student from a report, directly or indirectly, then you should store that report in a secure place. Share the report only with those with a legitimate educational interest – as determined by your school board.



District and State Laws and Policies

- District Policies and Procedures
 - Each district is required to have a policy to maintain the confidentiality of student records.
- State Statutes
 - 118.125
 - 115.787, 792, 807

Laws and Policies – Federal

These laws protect student privacy and give certain rights to students and their families. Violations may result in investigation and loss of federal funds.





Laws and Policies – Federal

- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 - 20 USC 1232g and 34CFR 99
 - *Violations of FERPA can jeopardize your district's federal funds!*



Laws and Policies – Federal

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - 34 CFR 300
- National School Lunch Act
 - 42 USC 1759(b)(6)



Thank You!

This has been only a brief introduction.
For more information, see:

- Department of Public Instruction
Student Data Privacy Information
<http://dpi.wi.gov/lbstat/dataprivacy.html>
- For district data policies, see your
district data security administrator.